

REMARKS

This paper responds to the office action mailed on November 3, 2005. Claims 11, 32 and 35 have been amended herein. Claims 1-10, 13-31, 33, and 34 have been canceled. Hence, claims 11, 12, 32 and 35 are currently pending. Applicants request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objections

Claims 11, 12 and 23-35 were objected to because of various informalities. Claims 11 and 32 have been amended as suggested in the office action, overcoming the objections thereto.

Claims 23, 24, 28 and 29 have been canceled.

Claim 33 was objected to because “the connector” allegedly lacked antecedent basis. Claim 33 depends from claim 32, which includes “an adapter comprising first and second ends, the first end comprising *a connector....*” (emphasis added). It thus appears the recitation of “a connector” in claim 32 provides an antecedent for the subsequent reference in claim 33.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

The office action rejected claims 8-10 under 35 USC 112, first paragraph. Claims 8-10 have been canceled, rendering the rejections under section 112 moot.

Double Patenting

Claim 11 was rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting. The office action noted, however, that the rejection would be obviated if claim 11 were amended as suggested under the Claim Objections section of the office action. Claim 11 has been so amended, obviating the double patenting rejection.

Claim Rejections 35 USC § 102

The office action rejected claims 22-24, 26-27 and 32 under 35 USC 102(b). Claims 22-24 and 26-27 have been canceled. Claim 32 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 34, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. The rejections under section 102 are thus believed to be overcome.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The office action rejected claims 1, 8-10, 25, 28-31 and 33 under 35 USC 103(a). Claims 1, 8-10, 25 and 28-31 have been canceled. Claim 32, from which claim 33 depends, has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 34. Since claim 32 is believed to be in condition for allowance, claim 33 is also allowable for at least the same reasons.

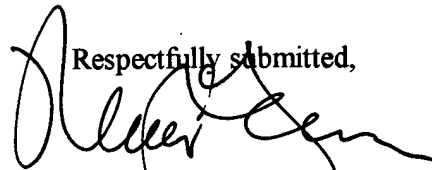
Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 11 has been amended as suggested in the office action, placing it in condition for allowance. Claim 12, dependent on claim 11, is thus also allowable. Claim 32 has been amended as suggested in the office action, and further to include the subject

matter of claim 34, which has been canceled. Claim 35 has been amended to change its dependency to claim 32 following the deletion of claim 34.

Conclusion

As evidenced by the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants have made a genuine effort to address each issue raised in the office action. All of the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney with any questions or comments.

Respectfully submitted,


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